

THE EVOLUTION OF THE INTERMEDIATE UNIT OF SCHOOL  
ADMINISTRATION IN CRAWFORD COUNTY, IOWA, SINCE  
THE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ACT OF 1947

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A Field Report  
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The Graduate Division  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Master of Science in Education

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by  
Donald A. Burgess  
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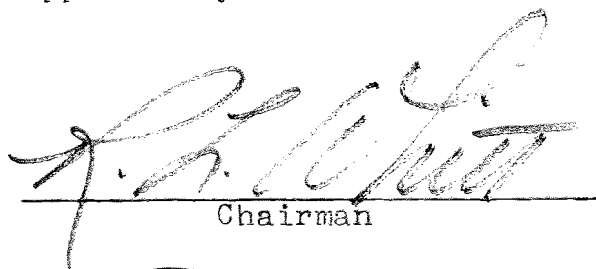
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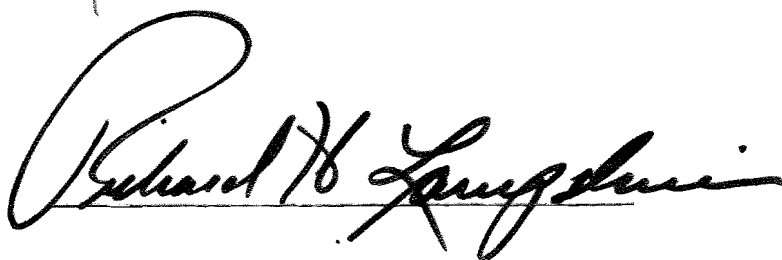
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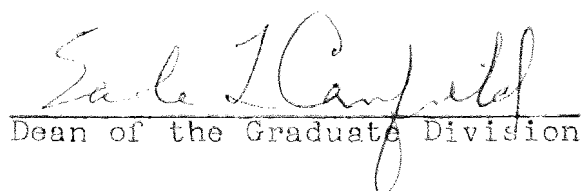
by

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND THE PROCEDURE USED

There are actually very few schools in sparsely settled rural areas that now provide what might be considered a completely desirable educational program.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the intermediate unit is emerging to help the local districts to provide a comprehensive educational program.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study is to determine the changes that have occurred in the county intermediate unit in relation to the services and supervision that it provides for the local school districts of Crawford County. In addition, this study will ascertain the extent to which this intermediate unit meets the criteria of an identified quality program of services needed to provide a complete educational program.

Importance of the study. The importance of this study is based on the concept that the county intermediate district is still definitely in the developmental stage. Neither its function or its structure is as clearly established as the state departments of education or the local community school districts. However, its need has been clearly established

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<sup>1</sup>National Education Association, Department of Rural Education. Rural Education--A Forward Look (Yearbook. Washington D. C.: National Education Association, 1955), p. 148.

and its possible service toward providing a complete educational program is now widely recognized.

The yearbook of the Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association stated that:

The intermediate administrative unit, the office of the county superintendent of schools in most states, is an old office . . . . It began as an arm of the state to provide general administrative supervision for the school districts in the county or comparable area served. It began at a time when most school districts did not have, or see any need for, a professional administrator of their own . . . . They preceded the great social and economic changes that have taken place in this country. They preceded school district reorganization, the transportation of pupils, and virtually every aspect of what is now considered part of a modern educational program.  
 . . .

The formal structure of intermediate units, the constitutional and legislative prescriptions, have made it most difficult to change and adapt as conditions have changed . . . . The intermediate unit as it now exists in many places is obsolete. But not unnecessary. What is needed is a new model to replace that now so out-of-date.  
 . . . . .

Enough is known about reorganization of local districts and the reorganization of intermediate units--how they should be structured, financed and staffed--that it is possible to conclude that every school district, regardless of its size or location, can have access to a comprehensive program of educational opportunities. This possibility is relatively new. It is as yet far from reality. But it will come. And its coming can be hastened substantially as all school administrators, both in large and small school systems, discover the potential of shared service programs and work with each other and other groups interested in establishing sound intermediate units capable of meeting today's needs. Even as now constituted, the intermediate unit can be a source of substantial help for most small school administrators. In most states it is certainly a first place to look for counsel and assistance.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Stephan J. Knezevich (ed.), Administration in a Small Community School (Year-book, Washington D. C.: National Education Association, Department of Rural Education, 1957), pp. 108-109.

This study is designed to determine how this particular intermediate unit has changed to more adequately meet the changing needs of the local districts in the Crawford County school system.

Definitions of an intermediate unit. The two most common definitions of an intermediate unit quoted in the literature on education are as follows:

An area comprising the territory of two or more basic administrative units and having a board, or officer, or both, responsible for performing stipulated services for the basic administrative units or for supervising their fiscal, administrative, or educational functions.<sup>1</sup>

An intermediate unit is an administrative organization established to function between the state education department and local school districts. It serves both the state department and local districts directly. The area always includes two or more local districts.<sup>2</sup>

## II. PROCEDURE

A review of the pertinent literature and research will be used to determine the historical background of the intermediate unit, the factors that influenced changes in education, which, in turn, caused changes in the role played by the intermediate unit, and how this unit of educational

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<sup>1</sup>National Commission on School District Reorganization, Your School District (Washington D.C.: National Education Association, 1948), p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>National Commission of the Intermediate Administrative Unit, Effective Intermediate Units (Washington D. C.: Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, 1955), p. 4.

administration has emerged to meet the changing needs. It will also be used to identify a quality program of services which should be provided for the local districts by an intermediate district of school administration.

A search of the official minutes, contracts, and annual reports of the Crawford County Board of Education has been made. The purpose of this search is to show, through an historical approach, how the services provided by this intermediate unit have evolved since the creation of the county school system by an act of the General Assembly of Iowa in 1947.

After the existing services offered by Crawford County have been identified, they will be compared to the program of services that should be provided by an intermediate unit with a quality program.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of the literature is designed to show the evolution of the intermediate unit. Beginning with its early history, it will then progress through the factors that have influenced it to change, the emerging concept of the intermediate unit, and finally, an attempt will be made to define a quality program of services that should be provided by the intermediate unit.

#### I. EARLY HISTORY OF THE INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Isenberg stated that from the beginning of our nation, each state has been a separate unit of school administration. However, the matter of providing schools was at first entirely subject to local action or inaction. Early laws were largely permissive in that they granted to groups of people the right to meet and form school districts and to levy taxes on their property for the support of schools.<sup>1</sup>

A 1962 report on rural education related that the effect of this period of permissiveness at the state level, coupled with a desire to keep school administration close to the people, resulted in the rapid development of many

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<sup>1</sup>Robert M. Isenberg (ed.), The Community School and the Intermediate Unit (Yearbook, Washington D. C.: National Education Association, Department of Rural Education, 1954), p. 25.

small local districts.<sup>1</sup>

As the states began to accept greater responsibility for education, the initial reaction in most states was the creation of a state level agency--usually a state superintendent--to oversee the local school districts. Iowa created the state superintendency by a legislative act in 1846.

Slow transportation and communication that existed between the state office and the local district, along with the multitude of local districts, made it impossible to supervise and enforce state regulations with any degree of thoroughness. This brought about a need to decentralize authority and place supervisory and regulatory responsibilities at a level close enough to actual school operation to be effective.<sup>2</sup>

Isenberg also recognized the need for decentralization and delegation of authority. He said that state legislatures created a system of regional school officers, usually county superintendents of schools, to function between the state and local districts. In this sense they were intermediate.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, Education Beyond High School Age--The Community College (A Report to the Sixtieth Iowa General Assembly. Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1962), p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Isenberg, op. cit., p. 26.

The 1955 Department of Rural Education Yearbook stated:

The intermediate unit came into existence and developed during a period of time in which the school systems of most states was characterized by thousands of small local administrative units. For the most part, each was a district with its total educational program housed in a rectangular one-room building with one teacher constituting the entire family. Two or three decades ago it was not at all uncommon to find as many as a hundred, and in some instances as many as two hundred of these small districts in a single county.<sup>1</sup>

An Iowa Research Committee report said that throughout the entire early history of the intermediate unit the role of the county superintendent consisted of being an educational leader for, and supervisory officer of the teachers in the districts that did not operate a high school.<sup>2</sup>

## II. FACTORS INFLUENCING CHANGE

One outstanding factor that influenced change in the educational scene was the consolidation and reorganization of local units into fewer and larger administrative districts. This has resulted in the reduction of administrative units in many counties from a hundred or more, to five or six and sometimes fewer. As an example, Crawford County,

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<sup>1</sup>National Education Association, Department of Rural Education. Rural Education--A Forward Look (Yearbook, Washington D. C.: National Education Association, 1955), p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>The Iowa Research Committee on the Intermediate Administrative Unit, Effective Intermediate Units in Iowa (A Report to the Department of Public Instruction. Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1960), p. 1.

Iowa, almost exactly fits the above description.

The Rural Education Yearbook further stated:

. . . The kind of services the intermediate district was created to provide for the small local unit are scarcely needed in the newly created, larger and stronger reorganized districts . . . .

From looking at the intermediate district and local school administration from this limited point of view, many people in areas where reorganization has progressed rapidly come to the conclusion that there is no longer need for an intermediate district of school administration. This unsound and unwarranted conclusion results from looking at the structure and mechanics of administration without, at the same time, viewing the instructional process. Changes in this aspect of public education within the last few years have been, perhaps, even more phenomenal than the progress made in school reorganization.<sup>1</sup>

Educational programs provided by the schools have undergone substantial and significant changes. The program has been extended upward until almost all young people receive a high school education. It has been extended downward to include kindergarten and, in some cases, even nursery schools. It has been broadened so that it is no longer limited to an academic program. Vocational education for those students who will seek employment rather than college admission is now quite common. The curriculum has been enriched through the inclusion of music, art, dramatics and the like. Social skills are also emphasized. The educational program has, in reality, become comprehensive. Services provided by the schools have been expanded to include

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<sup>1</sup>Rural Education--A Forward Look, op. cit., p. 143.

such things as the school lunch program, transportation of pupils, corrective programs for handicapped children, special education and pupil guidance.<sup>1</sup>

The yearbook summed up the influence for change thus:

Almost every aspect of the way in which people live and make a living has changed--in both rural and urban areas. Social institutions, however slowly and painfully, however much through trial-and-error, must change and adapt in order to meet the needs of the new situations and circumstances. Without responsiveness to change social institutions can no longer serve the people or the purpose for which they were created. And at this very point in time--a recognition of change and a struggle to adjust--educational organization is in transition, perhaps what will in time be the greatest adjustment American education has ever experienced.<sup>2</sup>

### III. EMERGENCE OF THE INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Even with the advent of reorganization, school districts, for the most part, are not going to be large enough to provide all the facets of today's comprehensive educational program. This point of view was supported by Monroe:

The developing concept of the intermediate unit recognizes that even after reorganization most local districts cannot provide comprehensive programs of educational services. On a regional or larger area basis, that is, within an appropriate intermediate district, a high level of specialized administrative and educational services is possible. When a number of the separate and autonomous local districts, both large and small, share in a cooperative area-wide program, virtually all the services which previously have been available only in large urban school systems can be provided in an effective and defensible manner for all. The possibility of a wide range of specialized educational services without the requirement of "too large" local districts has caused a widespread interest in this new concept on intermediate unit

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

functions. The types of functions now considered desirable at the intermediate level are: (a) providing educational leadership; (b) providing specialized educational services; (c) coordinating educational efforts among the various local districts within the intermediate district and between each of these local districts and the state.<sup>1</sup>

Rural areas, so regarded because of their relative sparsity of population, have special problems. Smaller population means, for the most part, smaller schools.

These smaller schools have limited resources and therefore, there are few schools in rural areas that are able to provide what is considered to be a desirable educational program. A program based on the needs for education of the children and adults served by these schools. A broad and varied curriculum is generally impossible and impractical. Smaller schools are unable to provide the allied services now recognized as being desirable. However, the inability of any school district, regardless of its size or location, to provide an adequate curriculum and program of educational services does not lessen the need for them.<sup>2</sup>

The Iowa State Department of Public Instruction defined a minimum curriculum as one that offered at least

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<sup>1</sup>Encyclopedia of Educational Research, a project of The American Research Association, a Department of the National Education Association, Walter S. Monroe, editor (third edition; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1198, cited by the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction, Education Beyond High School Age--The Community College (A Report to the Sixtieth Iowa General Assembly. Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1962), p. 50.

<sup>2</sup>Rural Education--A Forward Look, op. cit., p. 148.

forty-eight units of instruction in grades nine through twelve. No school in Iowa with a total enrollment of less than 750 met this criterion during the 1966-67 school year.<sup>1</sup>

The intermediate unit can best serve these schools by providing the services needed to supplement what the local schools are able to provide.

There is general consensus that if the intermediate unit is going to be able to meet the needs of the local district, it too must restructure or reorganize.

The General Assembly of Iowa, in 1947, took a significant step in restructuring its county intermediate units. The legislation provided for the establishment of a county school system with an elected board of education and an appointive superintendent of schools. Permission was also given to exercise its educational leadership by providing educational programs and services as requested by the local school districts. There were two additional important provisions in that law. The first provision allowed two or more county school systems to provide educational services on a cooperative basis. The second provision allowed two or more county school systems to employ a county superintendent to serve as a common administrator for the counties involved.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>State Department of Public Instruction. Data on Iowa Schools (Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1968), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Education Beyond High School Age, op. cit., p. 50

In 1965 the General Assembly passed additional permissive legislation. The law permitted two or more counties to merge and elect one common board of education. There would be advantages to this type of restructuring. It would equalize the tax burden by providing one tax base for the entire area. It would do away with unnecessary duplication. The major advantage, however, would be the additional and uniform educational services this enlarged area would be able to supply.<sup>1</sup>

Ralph C. Norris, Polk County Superintendent of Schools, in a personal interview stated that, in his opinion, "The permissiveness of Iowa law, in regard to the intermediate unit, makes the Iowa law among the best in the nation."<sup>2</sup>

Edwin Coen, former superintendent of schools of Crawford County, concurred with Norris' opinion. He stated that the permissive nature of the Iowa law allows an intermediate unit to reorganize on its own volition and offer educational services limited only to the needs and requests of the local schools in the intermediate district.<sup>3</sup>

Progress is sometimes slow when permissive legislation is involved. Consequently, there are people who would advocate that the legislature should abolish all existing

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial in The Des Moines Register, December 14, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph C. Norris, personal interview, June, 1968, permission to quote secured.

<sup>3</sup>Edwin Coen, personal interview, July, 1968.



intermediate units and create, in one sweeping law, a complete new system of "adequate" intermediate units. As an example, the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction proposed, in a report to the Sixtieth General Assembly, the establishment of sixteen area education districts. The districts would have replaced the county school system which was the intermediate unit at that time.<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. A QUALITY PROGRAM OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

It is difficult to identify a quality program of services which should be provided by an intermediate unit. All of the pertinent literature and research, even the law in Iowa, has stated that the need for any service and the request for it should originate with the local district and not the intermediate unit. The types of services requested vary because different areas and schools have different needs. However, it is possible to determine the types of services that are needed to provide a sound and desirable educational program.

The Iowa Research Committee on the Intermediate Administrative Unit identified the services that an intermediate unit should consider providing. They were listed as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>Education Beyond High School Age, op. cit., p. 59.

1. Adult education
2. Audio-visual services including television
3. Building planning services
4. Centralized and cooperative purchasing
5. Curriculum laboratory and instructional materials
6. Curriculum evaluation and leadership
7. Exceptional children (services) including regular and itinerant teachers as needed for the--  
gifted, retarded, crippled, partially sighted,  
speech defectives, hard of hearing, homebound.
8. Financial services including--  
accounting, counseling, reporting, salary  
policy, schedule development.
9. Information services
10. Inservice education programs for the--  
administrators, teachers, bus drivers, clerical  
personnel, custodians, lunch personnel.
11. Legal services
12. Library services--  
consultative, exhibits, professional materials.
13. Professional personnel services including--  
teacher recruitment, substitute teacher pool.
14. Pupil health services including--  
school nurse, doctor, dental health, hygiene.
15. Pupil personnel services including--  
attendance supervisor, guidance and counseling,  
testing, psychological, psychiatric.
16. Post-high school education
17. Recreation and school camping programs
18. Research services
19. Trade and industrial education<sup>1</sup>

The Great Plains Project allocated programs and services to the intermediate unit in the following areas:

1. Administrative and staff personnel programs and services
  - Administrative and business management consultant services
  - In-service programs for members of boards of education, school board secretaries and treasurers
  - School building consultant services
  - School district reorganization consultant services
  - Electronic data processing services
  - Public information services
  - Cooperative purchasing programs
  - In-Service programs for classroom teachers, specialists, supervisors, consultants and administrators

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<sup>1</sup>Effective Intermediate Units in Iowa, op. cit., p. 84.

- In-service programs for non-certified personnel including transportation, food service, maintenance, custodial, secretarial and clerical
- Substitute teacher services
- Services for the state education agency
- Coordinative activities with other health, welfare, and social agencies in the public and private sectors, and other governmental subdivisions
- 2. Instructional programs and services
  - Educational media center
  - Elementary and secondary curriculum consultant services
  - Outdoor education programs
  - Remedial instruction programs and services
  - Health consultant programs and services
  - Testing programs and services
  - Institutionalized children's education programs
- 3. Student personnel programs and services
  - Consultant services for student personnel programs
  - In-service programs for guidance counselors and other professional personnel
  - Other student personnel programs and services including graduate follow-up studies and drop-out studies
- 4. Special education programs and services
  - Programs for trainable retarded children
  - Work-study program
  - Programs for emotionally disturbed children
  - Psychological and psychiatric services
  - Programs for physically handicapped children and children with special health problems
  - Program for exceptional children of pre-school age
  - Homebound instruction programs
  - Programs for partially-sighted and blind children
  - Programs for hard-of-hearing and deaf children
  - Programs for speech handicapped children
  - School social work services
  - Programs for children with specific learning disabilities
  - Providing coordinative and cooperative efforts for the many health, welfare and social agencies in the public and private sectors
- 5. Research and development programs and services
  - Budget analysis and cost studies
  - Long-range financial planning
  - Community surveys
  - Enrollment studies
  - Pilot projects in various curricular areas
  - Evaluation of instructional materials
  - Development of local school district and regional norms for standardized tests

## Evaluation of various types of organizational and grouping practices<sup>1</sup>

Stephens in his study for the Linn County Board of Education classified the functions of the intermediate unit into three major categories. These three categories are as follows:

1. Articulative Functions
  - Assisting local school districts in complying with state laws and administrative regulations
  - Compiling attendance, financial, personnel and other statistical records
  - Assisting with supervision of school transportation and school lunch programs
  - Assisting with teacher certification
  - Assisting with school district reorganization
  - Acting as an appeal agency
2. Coordinative functions
  - Administrative consultant services
  - Business management consultant services
  - Cooperative purchasing services
  - Federal program consultant services
  - Assistance in the development of curricula
  - Assistance in the development of courses of study
  - Assistance in in-service programs for instructional personnel
  - Assistance in in-service programs for non-instructional personnel
  - Assistance in in-service programs for administrators
  - Assistance in in-service programs for boards of education
3. Supplementary service functions
  - Instructional materials centers
  - Curricular consultant services
  - Special classes for handicapped children
  - Speech and hearing therapist services
  - Psychological services
  - Diagnostic and remediation centers
  - Guidance and counseling services
  - Data processing centers
  - Research services

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<sup>1</sup>Ellis G. Hanson (director), Great Plains School District Organization Project. A Design for Educational Organization in Iowa (A Report to the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction. Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1968), pp. 139-40.

Outdoor education programs  
Program analysis and evaluation services  
Local school district surveys  
Educational television and closed-circuit  
television services  
Legal counsel  
School medical and nursing services<sup>1</sup>

The major roles and functions that an intermediate unit should consider providing for the schools in its district or area were remarkably consistent in all three of the studies. However, Stephens warned that each intermediate unit should develop its own pattern of programs and services reflecting the needs of the constituent school districts. He also stated that the intermediate unit should guard against adopting a fixed pattern or scope of services of other intermediate districts and that all service programs should be developed to meet the needs of the area served, based on detailed study and analysis.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>E. Robert Stephens (director), "The Multi-County Regional Educational Service Agency in Iowa," Final Report of the Iowa Center for Research in School Administration, Part I (Iowa City: State University of Iowa, 1967), pp. 387-89.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 389.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE INTERMEDIATE UNIT OF CRAWFORD COUNTY, IOWA

This study of the intermediate unit of school administration of Crawford County, Iowa, included the following areas: (a) the status of the county intermediate unit during the year preceding the county school system act, (b) the legal basis for the county unit to provide educational services, (c) the evolution of the services provided by the county since the effective date of the county school system act, and (d) a comparison of the services provided by the county and those provided by an identified quality program of services.

##### I. STATUS PRIOR TO THE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM ACT

General background. In 1947, the year preceding the effective date of the county school system act, the county intermediate unit was primarily concerned with supervisory and regulatory functions. Almost one hundred rural elementary schools were still in operation. Coen stated, "There were more school board directors in the county than there were teachers."<sup>1</sup> The county superintendent expended most of his energy and time acting as the administrator for the rural school system. The only personnel in the county

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<sup>1</sup>Coen, op. cit.

intermediate unit at this time included the superintendent and his administrative assistant, and of the 9,285 dollars budgeted for 1947, almost 8,100 dollars was used for their salaries and associated office expenses.<sup>1</sup> This left a minimal amount of money to finance services for the local districts in the county.

Services provided. The services provided to the schools of the county were, by today's standards, rather insignificant.

Library services consisted of the allocation of the money collected in fines in the county to the local schools. This allocation was based on the school census. The town schools were allowed to select their own library materials and to place them in the school library. However, the selection of library materials for the rural schools was made cooperatively by the county superintendent and the teachers involved.<sup>2</sup> These materials were placed in a central library, in the county office, so they would be available to all the schools. In addition to the fine money, a small appropriation to the library fund was made from the county education budget.

Information services provided by the county intermediate unit consisted of a series of meetings throughout

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<sup>1</sup>Crawford County School Board, Official Minutes, 1947.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the county, in which the county assumed leadership, to inform the people about reorganization. These meetings were primarily concerned with studies and surveys made in planning for reorganization of the county schools. The following were the major points discussed at those meetings: (a) the high cost of rural schools; (b) the possibility of some townships closing their small schools and, if necessary, transporting students to nearby, larger schools; (c) the closing of small rural schools near towns and transporting the children to the town schools.

Inservice education consisted of occasional meetings with the rural teachers and a one-day tri-county institute for all teachers. The institute was jointly sponsored by Crawford, Monona and Harrison counties. The cost, exceeding the money appropriated by the state for this purpose, was shared by all three counties.

## II. LEGAL BASIS FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

In 1947 the General Assembly of Iowa passed an act creating the county school system. It provided for an elected board of education with four members to be elected from districts and the fifth member to be elected at large. The county superintendent of schools was appointed by the board. Permission was also granted in this act to provide educational programs and services as requested by the boards of the local school districts, to allow two or more



county systems to provide the requested services cooperatively, and to allow two or more counties to combine to employ one county superintendent to serve the multiple-county area.<sup>1</sup>

### III. EVOLUTION OF SERVICES IN CRAWFORD COUNTY SINCE 1947

The county school system act went into effect April 1, 1948. No revision of the educational services took place during the ensuing 1948-49 school year. In July of 1949, Crawford and Monona counties cooperatively provided the services of a special education consultant and a speech correctionist. They both became available to all the schools in the two counties to advise and counsel the local teachers in identifying and meeting the needs of atypical students. They worked with the individual students who were referred to them by the local schools.

In May of 1951, Crawford County, acting independently, provided the services of an elementary consultant. The principal duty of this consultant was to supervise the one-room rural schools but, upon request, was available to the town schools for consultation. An audio-visual service was created by the intermediate unit of Crawford County. This service included film strips, slides, records, record players

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<sup>1</sup>Education Beyond High School Age, op. cit., p. 50.

and projection equipment.

A testing program encompassing all grades in the rural schools was also instituted at that time. The purpose of the testing program was to measure progression or achievement in the rural schools.

The budget, which had remained at the same level for three years, was approximately doubled to provide the increased services.

The services were not altered during 1952 and from 1953 through 1956, the county board of education was kept quite busy dealing with the problems of reorganization. The budget during this period of time increased to 24,000 dollars. Most of this increase was the result of the costs associated with reorganization and the many appeals handled by the board. This burst of reorganization brought about the end of all one-room rural schools in Crawford County. The county school system now consisted of six community school districts.

A class for the educable, mentally retarded was approved in February of 1957 and initiated in the 1957-58 school year. The county unit assumed the entire cost of rent, teacher's salary and instructional supplies. The local districts were responsible for pupil transportation.

A new approach to inservice education was used at this time. The consultant program from Iowa State Teacher's College was scheduled and financed for all the community school districts. This program was sponsored by the county

unit on a one-time basis. The hope was to get the schools interested in that type of program so that when the intermediate unit removed its sponsorship, the local schools would continue the program on their own. This agrees with the philosophy that an intermediate district should continue to offer only those services that can be more economically or efficiently offered at the county level.

The programs and services offered by Crawford County varied very little over the next five years. This was substantiated by a very moderate increase in the operating budget from 32,000 dollars in the 1957-58 school year to 40,600 dollars in the 1962-63 school year.

A class for trainable mentally retarded students was incorporated into the 1963-64 school year with the intermediate unit again assuming all expenses except transportation.

The county board was requested to expand its present educational services in July of 1964. A psychologist and a second class for the educable mentally retarded students were explicitly requested. An additional 20,000 dollars was budgeted for 1965 for that purpose.

After investigation, Crawford County joined with Ida, Cherokee and Buena Vista counties in January of 1965 to form a multiple-county special education program. At that time, the existing joint program including Crawford and Monona counties was dissolved.

The multiple-county special education program has evolved to include the following staff: (a) a director of special education, (b) a consultant for the mentally retarded, (c) a teacher for the visually handicapped, (d) a teacher for the hard of hearing, (e) a teacher for the homebound and hospitalized, (f) two psychologists, (g) four speech clinicians, and (h) secretarial help. The administrative "center" for the multiple-county special education program was located in Buena Vista County.

The multiple-county special education center and its staff was under the control of a representative educational council. This council consisted of two members appointed from each of the four county boards of education.

It was financed on a proportionate basis by each of the four counties. The proportion was based on the school census within the county. Crawford County's share was 29.4 per cent of the total cost.

In addition to the staff of the multiple-county special education center, each county intermediate unit maintained and supported five classes for mentally retarded students. These classes included a class for trainable students, a class for educable students in the primary grades, a class for educable students in the intermediate grades, a prevocational class and a work-study class with one full-time teacher and one part-time teacher.

The classes for the mentally retarded, within each

county, were controlled and financed by the county intermediate unit. Some of the financing was secured through federal funds derived from the Title I program. Crawford County notified all schools in the county system that beginning with the 1970-71 school year, they were limiting their support for these classes to 25,000 dollars per year. If costs increased or Title I funds decreased, then the schools in the county would have to provide some financing on a proportionate basis.

At this time, with the inclusion of the additional services, Crawford County's budget had almost doubled again. The total budget for the 1965-66 school year was 76,895 dollars.

In May of 1965, the county boards of education for Crawford, Ida and Cherokee counties employed one county superintendent to serve jointly for all three counties. Crawford County was responsible for 38.2 per cent of his remuneration.

By 1966, the audio-visual materials supplied by the intermediate unit had become outdated. To compensate, the county board approved a contractual agreement with the Title II, Area Educational Resource Center at Sergeant Bluff, Iowa. This center provided audio-visual, instructional and library materials for the county school system. The initial cost of this service was forty cents per pupil but has since risen to one dollar per pupil.

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The current budget approved for the 1968-69 school year was 121,000 dollars. This was a substantial increase over the 9,285 dollar budget of 1948.

In the twenty years since the county school system was created, the budget rose to a level thirteen times as high as it was originally. Some of this increase could undoubtedly be classed as increased costs for similar functions and services, but much of it has to be attributed to increased services this intermediate unit has provided for the schools in its district.

Seven county school systems in Iowa, Crawford County included, have not joined one of the sixteen educational areas into which the state has been divided. The merging of county school systems into larger educational areas has taken place under permissive state legislation. Therefore, no county has been forcefully assigned to any area. The State Department of Public Instruction must approve these mergers and has established some basic guidelines for approval. The purpose of the guidelines is to insure, to a degree, that the educational areas formed will have adequate financing and enough students to offer a wide variety of services. The State Department adopted Stephens' criteria for an area large enough to provide an assessed valuation of 300,000,000 dollars and an enrollment of 30,000 students.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Stephens, op. cit., p. 366.

The services provided by these larger areas have been, for the most part, of a supplementary nature. They have usually included the types of services that were virtually impossible for the rural county to provide. The following are examples of those services: educational television on a temporary basis and often using commercial television stations because a state sponsored educational television network has been approved, but appropriations to complete it are still forthcoming; computerized data processing; large, well-stocked educational resource centers; continuing education in the form of community colleges, vocational education, adult education and vocational rehabilitation centers.

Crawford County has studied two different possibilities for merging with a larger area. The first included a merger with Audubon and Carroll counties and a part of Guthrie County. This merger would have had an assessed valuation of 144,000,000 dollars and an enrollment of 11,000 students. Both were well below the suggested guidelines. The second possibility studied was to join an already established area, Area XII. Crawford County has used some of the services provided by Area XII even though it has not been an integral part of the area. The Educational Resource Center of Area XII has provided resource materials to the county system through a contractual agreement. Even though the county rejected educational television for the county school system, some local districts made voluntary contributions and have used this area service during the past school

year. In May of 1966, the county board of education filed a letter of intent to merge with Area XII but when Denison, which is the county seat of Crawford County, was not assured a satellite vocational school or center the board voted to withdraw.

Crawford County, as with many other intermediate units, is still in a state of transition or development. Additional services are being planned, discussed and studied. O'Donnell stated, "Many of the services not provided by this intermediate unit are just around the corner. There is no doubt that these services are coming and maybe much more rapidly than many people have expected."<sup>1</sup>

This has been the picture of twenty years of evolution of the services provided by the intermediate unit of Crawford County, Iowa.

#### IV. CRAWFORD COUNTY'S SERVICES COMPARED TO A QUALITY PROGRAM OF SERVICES

The services provided by the intermediate unit in Crawford County will be compared to the quality program of services that should be offered by an intermediate unit. The quality program of services was identified in the previous chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>Steven L. O'Donnell, County Superintendent of Schools of Crawford, Ida and Cherokee counties, personal interview, July, 1968. Permission to quote secured.



Adult education. No program of services in the field of adult education was provided by the intermediate unit of Crawford County.

Audio-visual services. Audio-visual services are provided under a contractual agreement with the Area XII Educational Resource Center. Some additional film strips, slides and records along with projection equipment is kept in the intermediate office. Educational television is not included as a service sponsored by the intermediate unit.

Building planning services. No formalized program exists although advice is given if requested. Iowa law does require that building plans of local school districts be approved by the county superintendent.

Centralized and cooperative purchasing. Each of the local school districts does its own purchasing.

Curriculum laboratory and instructional materials. No curriculum laboratory exists, but a large variety of instructional materials are available through the Educational Resource Center of Area XII. This service is provided by the county unit on a contractual basis.

Curriculum evaluation and revision leadership. Curriculum evaluation and revision has remained, except for state requirements, a function of the local school district.

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Exceptional children. The intermediate unit provides regular and itinerant teachers for the retarded, partially sighted, speech defective, hard of hearing and homebound students. There is no program for the gifted or the physically handicapped student except as provided by the local district.

Financial services. No financial services of any type are provided by the intermediate unit. Help, if requested, is given to school board secretaries and business managers.

Information services. There has been no continuing program, but as the need arose, a program was instituted. An example of this would be the informing of school boards, superintendents, and citizens on significant legislation such as the laws on reorganization and state financial support.

Inservice education. A monthly meeting is held with all the superintendents of the county school system. A one-day tri-county institute is sponsored on an annual basis for the teachers and administrators of the intermediate district. Meetings for bus drivers, clerical personnel, custodians and lunch personnel are sponsored by the State Department of Public Instruction and are held on an area basis.

Legal services. No legal services are provided by the intermediate unit.

Library services. Consultative and professional materials are not provided in the county office although they are available, along with exhibits, through a contractual agreement with the Area XII Educational Resource Center.

Professional personnel services. The intermediate unit does not maintain a program of teacher recruitment. However, a substitute teacher pool is maintained. This consists of a list including the names, certification and teaching fields. This list is made available to each superintendent in the county school system.

Pupil health services. Pupil health services are provided by the county nurse. Some districts employ their own nurse. Periodic immunization clinics are held in all schools in the county. A dental card program is encouraged providing for an annual checkup with corrections.

Pupil personnel services. Attendance supervision, guidance and counseling are provided by the local districts in Crawford County. Psychological services and testing are available through the special education center sponsored by the intermediate unit. No psychiatric help is available except by referral to the State Mental Health Institute.

Post-high school education. The intermediate unit provides no program of post-high school education.

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Recreation and school camping programs. No programs are provided by the intermediate unit.

Research services. Research services are not offered by the intermediate unit. Some of the local districts subscribe to the research facilities at Iowa City.

Trade and industrial education. Crawford County has been working toward and studying the possibility of merging with a larger area to provide vocational education for the county school system. At the present, however, no provision for this service exists.

Crawford County provided a limited number of services included in the identified quality program, but it has made considerable progress toward that goal. Most of the services provided by the county were the result of cooperative or contractual relations with other counties or areas. The county has not merged with one of the larger educational areas into which the state has been divided. A merger with one of the existing educational areas could have made it possible to have economically and efficiently provided some of the more costly services or those services requiring a larger student enrollment.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the changes that have occurred in the county intermediate unit in relation to the services and supervision that it provides for the local school districts of Crawford County. In addition, this study sought to ascertain the extent to which this intermediate unit met the criteria of an identified quality program of services needed to provide a complete educational program.

#### II. PROCEDURE

A review of the pertinent literature and research was used to determine the historical background of the intermediate unit, the factors that influenced changes in education, which, in turn, caused changes in the role played by the intermediate unit, and how this unit of educational administration has emerged to meet the changing needs. It was also used to identify a quality program of services which should be provided for the local districts by an intermediate unit of school administration.

A search of the official minutes, contracts and annual reports of the Crawford County Board of Education has been made. The purpose of that search was to show, through an historical approach, how the services provided by this

intermediate unit have evolved since the creation of the county school system by an act of the General Assembly of Iowa in 1947.

After the existing services offered by Crawford County were identified, they were compared to the program of services that should be provided by an intermediate unit with a quality program.

### III. SUMMARY

Prior to the county school system act of 1947, the Crawford County intermediate unit was primarily concerned with supervisory and regulatory functions. Very few services were offered to the schools of the county and what was offered was of a very minimal nature. Most of the county superintendent's time and energy was devoted to administering to the nearly one hundred rural elementary schools in the county.

The county school system act, which established an elected board and an appointed superintendent, granted permission for the county intermediate unit to provide educational programs and services requested by the local school districts. Another significant part of that law allowed counties to provide services on a cooperative basis.

In the first five years after the county school system was created, the county unit established the following services: (a) a special education consultant and a speech

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correctionist were provided cooperatively with Monona County, (b) an elementary consultant, (c) an audio-visual service, and (d) an achievement testing program for the rural elementary schools.

The next ten years were occupied with the problems of reorganization and a period of adjustment needed by the newly formed school districts. The rural elementary school disappeared and was replaced by six community school districts. As a consequence, very few services were added during this period of time.

In the last five years a flurry of activity took place and the county unit instituted the following services: (a) a very comprehensive four-county program in special education, (b) five classes for mentally retarded students in the county, and (c) the availability of abundant audio-visual, instructional and library materials through a contractual agreement with the Area XII Educational Resource Center.

In the twenty years since the county school system was created, the budget rose to a level thirteen times as high as it was originally. Some of this increase could undoubtedly be classed as increased costs for similar functions and services, but much of it has to be attributed to the increased services this intermediate unit has provided.

Crawford County does not provide all the services included in the identified quality program of services for an intermediate unit, but it has made substantial progress

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toward that goal. New programs and services are being studied to increase the effectiveness of this intermediate unit.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Crawford County has substantially increased the services it provides for the local school districts.

Crawford County provides very few services entirely on its own without a cooperative or contractual agreement with other counties or areas.

Crawford County has, by cooperating with three other counties, provided a very comprehensive special education program.

Crawford County, by contracting with Area XII, has provided an excellent source of resource materials.

Crawford County has no program of services in the following recognized areas:

1. Adult education
  2. Building planning services
  3. Centralized and cooperative purchasing
  4. Financial services
  5. Legal services
  6. Post-high school education
  7. Recreation and school camping program
  8. Research services
  9. Trade and industrial education
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Crawford County needs to procure supplementary services from a larger educational area if it is to provide those services that are insufficient or totally lacking.

Crawford County should consider merging with one of the sixteen educational areas, into which the state has been divided, to secure their supplementary services.

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